

Fredericksburg Arts Commission Meeting

**Thursday, July 2nd, 2009
City Hall Conference Room**

Attendees: Roy Jarnecke, Julie Perry, Kathleen Walsh, Peter Scelfo, Kevin Bartram, George Solley, Pat Thalman, Florence Ridderhoff.

Election of Officers

Roy Jarnecke called the meeting to order and then opened the floor for nominations of officers for the 2010 year. Florence Ridderhoff moved we accept the existing slate of officers to continue their terms. Peter Scelfo seconded the motion. The slate passed unanimously.

Roy Jarnecke – Chairman
Kevin Bartram – Vice- Chairman
Peter Scelfo – Treasurer
Julie Perry – Secretary

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the June 4th meeting were presented. Kevin Bartram moved we accept the minutes as written and George Solley seconded the motion. The minutes passed unanimously.

Public Comment

There were two members of the public in attendance and both were scheduled to make a presentation. Sue Henderson and Brenda Lynne quickly introduced themselves and the Arts Commission moved forward to hear Ms. Lynne's presentation.

Presentation

Brenda Lynne, MSW, Mary Washington Hospice on the creative process as a healing process

Kathleen Walsh introduced Brenda Lynne who passed out a handout on her work with the Hospice's program in Complementary Therapies. The Mary Washington Foundation has funded a one-year Complimentary Therapy Pilot Program with Mary Washington Hospice.

Medicorp and Mary Washington Hospice value and understand the ability of the arts to provide a break from pain (physical, emotional and spiritual) and create an atmosphere for healing, self-expression, diversion and control.

Sometimes art achieves what therapy, medication or the best care cannot. These moments can feel like a little miracles when they happen, but they are usually instances of art functioning as it normally does: inspiring, motivating, engaging parts of people's bodies or brains that they haven't been using, or just allowing them to transcend their environments for a little while.

- *Liz Lerman, Founding Artistic Director*
Liz Lerman Dance Exchange, Takoma Park, MD

Some of the suggestions Ms. Lynne made to the Commission were using local artists for periodic performances, memorial projects, art at the bedside, and fundraising possibilities. She stressed her willingness to work with all different mediums and styles as well as hospice's ability to provide the trained medical personnel to assist the artist who is volunteering their time and skills.

Committee Reports

Arts Festival Committee – Kevin Bartram

Kevin Bartram welcomed Sue Henderson, our second member of the public in attendance. Sue Henderson introduced herself as the event planner the Commission has retained to coordinate their 2010 arts event. Ms. Henderson stressed that the Arts Festival Committee was still in the early planning stages and that she was present to ask the Commission to contribute ideas from their experiences and travels for Festivals and arts related events that they would like to see in Fredericksburg.

Pat Thalman then presented handouts from the *Artomatic* event she recently attended. It was discussed that the festival was artist driven and what an important factor that is for the success of any arts related event. Florence Ridderhoff then asked Pat Thalman how involved the performing arts were in the *Artomatic* event. She explained that *Artomatic* was open to all artists.

Kathleen Walsh then asked if it was the type of information that Sue Henderson was looking for from Commission members. Ms. Henderson said yes, that the committee's main goal at the moment is to define what we want our festival to look like. George Solley said he would like for the committee to present not only an original festival plan but a growth plan for the event in future years. Mr. Solley also brought up the Fredericksburg Area Museum's new plan for a fall arts festival – *Homegrown Festival* - in 2009.

As a closing remark Kevin Bartram informed the Commission that the Arts Festival Committee anticipates making a formal presentation to the entire Commission for approval of the festival concept and budget in November.

Long Term Planning Committee – Peter Scelfo

Peter Scelfo informed the Arts Commission of the planning committee's presentation schedule. He said the First Phase of the Strategic Plan was almost finished and would include the background information and executive summary. The Second Phase is the goals and objectives section of the document.

The committee's goals are to have a September retreat to present the entire document to the Commission. Saturday, September 19th was suggested. Julie

Perry said she would check on some possible locations and on what the policy was for the commission in regards to public/private meetings. A motion was made to set-up a tentative presentation date for the Strategic Plan for Saturday morning September 19th. The motion passed unanimously.

After the September presentation the committee plans to take comments during October and move for ratification in November and December of 2009.

Website and Cultural Survey Committee Report- Carolyn Van Der Jagt/PatThalman

Carolyn Van Der Jagt began her presentation by reminding the Commission that the survey was supposed to be over on July 1st. Members of the Commission agreed that in order to keep taking information for the Cultural Survey that the July 1st date should simply be removed.

Then Pat Thalman said the next step is to focus on the directory and the numerous links needed to access the website and promote it in the community. She also expressed concern about the City of Fredericksburg's website and its shortcomings in the area of Arts Marketing and her understanding of how the Arts community currently fits on VisitFred.com, Fredericksburgva.gov and ArtsPoint.org. Florence Ridderhoff then reminded the Commission that originally the group was told they were not allowed to do a separate website than the city sites. Much discussion followed about these issues and it became obvious that there were many different perspectives and sources of information. Julie Perry suggested the subcommittee needed to meet to discuss these things more fully and to present its findings to the Commission at large.

Old Business

Arts & Cultural District – George Solley

George presented some basic information about the City of Fredericksburg and the State of Virginia in reference to the new ability to create an Arts and Cultural District as of July 1st, 2009. He informed the Commission that he hoped to have more information on the City of Fredericksburg's project specifically at the next meeting and Roy Jarnecke said he would put it on the August agenda. George Solley then asked Commission members to contribute thoughts and ideas as to what type of incentives would be most beneficial to working artists.

Next Peter Scelfo asked George Solley if the Arts and Cultural District could wait a few months to be included in the Strategic Plan's ratification process. George Solley responded that he felt like this did not need to wait and that he would like it to move forward faster than that process would allow. Dr. Scelfo then asked about the geographical boundaries and specifically whether Maury Field would be included in a proposed Arts and Cultural District. George Solley responded that he felt the boundary lines would be the most hotly contested item in the package and that nothing had been finalized. Kevin Bartram then asked Mr.

Solley about the process from this point and where the Arts Commission could, and should be involved. He responded that the process would go from City Staff to the Planning Commission to the City Council. The Arts Commission would be advisors along the way and may be invited to have membership on the staff committee.

Community Calendar – Peter Scelfo

Peter Scelfo began his presentation by reminding the group that a calendar is one of the original initiatives or goals that the Commission identified in its conception one year ago. In a desire to move this initiative forward in a quicker pace, he met with Dave Smalley at the Free Lance Star. Mr. Smalley is the editor of the Weekender, which hosts a very comprehensive arts and events listing for free on a weekly basis. Unfortunately, Dave Smalley informed him that the weekender has some limitations when viewed in the broader scope that the Arts Commission was hoping to have in a regional, 18 month calendar. The first limitation is that the size of the weekly publication is driven by the advertisement sales for that given time, not by event schedules. And the second, and most limiting issue, is that the Free Lance Star is prohibited from forming alliances with any outside organization because of journalistic privilege.

Kevin Bartram informed the Commission that the Rappahannock Arts Council is building an online calendar that will tentatively be launched in September 2009. Peter Scelfo then asked Carolyn Van Der Jagt if it had been decided whether that calendar would be provided free of charge to area artists. Ms. Van Der Jagt said that to her knowledge it had not been decided. Julie Perry added that the limitations of being a City based Commission and answering to government rules and regulations would not be an issue for Kathryn Willis and her Council. Therefore, she thought this was a project the Rappahannock Arts Council could make strides with. George Solley told the group that he was meeting with Kathryn Willis on Monday, July 6th and would bring up the subject at that time to report back.

New Business

Kathleen Walsh presented an idea to the Arts Commission that we request all City Departments that work with special events refer any Arts related project to the Arts Commission before any approvals or support are given. She suggested we begin the legwork to create a protocol which would keep our group informed of Arts happenings in the City of Fredericksburg. Florence Ridderhoff added that the Arts Commission is not currently a known entity and that this could help give validity to its mission and program of work. George Solley told the group that these connections within City Government were important in event planning and it would be all about procedure to make this an effective program. Roy Jarnecke said he would draft a proposal document and be in touch with the Fredericksburg Area Museum in reference to their Homegrown Festival and go through the process with them as a trial.

Julie Perry announced she would not be at the next meeting due to her personal vacation plans and Roy Jarnecke said he would take notes in her absence.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, August 6th at 7pm in the City Hall Conference Room.

Adjournment

Peter Scelfo made a motion that the meeting be adjourned and Kevin Bartram seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.